

THE CARRBORO
CITIZEN

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No delay
in landfill
closure

Just when we thought the Pandora’s box that is the Orange County Landfill was finally nailed shut for good, Carrboro Mayor Mark Chilton has pried it open one more time.

Mayor Chilton is proposing that we delay once again the proposed closure of the landfill, this time until 2015.

In October of last year, the Orange County Board of Commissioners declared their intent to close the landfill in 2013, seemingly ending years of debate over the mistreatment of the Rogers Road neighborhood that abuts the site.

At that same meeting, commissioners also voted unanimously to develop a plan to provide water hook-ups in the neighborhood and authorize the cleanup of illegal dumpsites in the community.

Chilton, however, citing both environmental and fiscal concerns, has suggested that a delay in closure until 2015 would allow time to develop a waste transfer station, possibly at the intersection of I-40 and N.C. 86. Such a station could save both Carrboro and Chapel Hill significant amounts of money while also keeping garbage trucks from having to drive to Durham to dump their garbage.

While both these goals are highly desirable, there are at least two problems with the mayor’s approach. First, the idea of locating a transfer station in Orange County is not new,

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country’s garbage for
40 years.*

and apparently no new solutions are being offered to this vexing issue. The community has talked exhaustively about how to handle our garbage.

The second problem with his idea is the math he used to support it. At last week’s board of aldermen meeting, he said that the 1 cent addition to the tax rate that would be needed to cover the cost of transporting our garbage to Durham would cost his household an “extra 350 bucks.”

We’re pretty sure the mayor’s mill village house isn’t worth \$3.5 million, and that he really meant to say 35 bucks, a lot easier number to swallow for most taxpayers, and a whole lot less scary.

While we agree that we should continue our efforts to save tax dollars and mitigate the effects of hauling our garbage, the most important point to remember is that any delay just exacerbates the decades of injustice perpetrated on the Rogers Road community.

This neighborhood has been suffering in the shadow of our county’s mountain of garbage for 40 years, about 30 more than they were promised. Our community’s laudable recycling efforts have extended the “life” of the landfill again and again, leaving Rogers Road to suffer more vermin, more trash and more stench, while the rest of us save money.

If we want to save more money, then let it not be on the backs of those who have borne the burden for so many years. Mayor Chilton is right – we need to continue to look for a better option to trucking our garbage someplace else. But pursuing this option will be difficult and time consuming. Based on past experience, it seems it would take a miracle to have a transfer station in southern Orange County up and running by 2015.

A great environmental injustice has been done, is being done, to the Rogers Road neighbors. At this point, the right thing for this community to do is close this landfill with no delay.



“AS YOU CAN SEE, MITT, WE STILL NEED TO ADDRESS SOME ISSUES WITH THE RIGHT WING...”

LETTERS

Council action unacceptable

In December 2011, the Town Council assigned the Community Policing Advisory Council the task of making recommendations regarding the Yates building incident. When the recommendation came back this month in favor of an independent investigation, the council voted to reject the very same recommendation it had asked for. I find this bizarre and unacceptable, especially in view of the fact that CPAC voted unanimously having spent what they described as a grueling eight hours of discussion and deliberation.

It seems it wasn’t enough to express displeasure at CPAC’s conclusion; council members had to publicly humiliate Judge Ron Bogle by letting him twist in the wind with council members’ giggling naysaying. The professional that he is, Ron Bogle surprised by standing humbly yet stalwartly at the mic for the whole half-hour while being pilloried by the same council members who had asked for his commission’s recommendation in the first place.

Admit it: The system is falling apart, your maneuvers are transparent to all who are watching carefully and there is no way out but to seek and face the truth of what happened on Nov. 13 and in the days leading up to it. We at Occupy are giving of our days and nights to witness to the political/economic systems’ failure in our country – nationwide, statewide and citywide. We will not stop bearing witness. This movement is too large to fail. Acquiesce to the voice of the people, or be swept away.

SONIA KATCHIAN
Chapel Hill

Dancing Bruce an asset to WS lawn

Congratulations to Carr Mill Mall managers and Weaver Street Market. You have effectively and finally rid the community of Bruce Thomas, the “dancing man” ... and good riddance, I say.

So what that he is a gentle and good soul? So what that he reminds us to slow down and realize that we are a community of one? So what that he demonstrates on a daily basis an inner peace, compassion and love for all? So what that he is a model citizen acting with real concern for his neighbors?

No. He dances on the lawn. Goodness knows what that could lead to, stomping on the grass and acting free and one with nature. What if we all felt that way and were open enough to express ourselves without restraint?

No. He makes children laugh and kids run up to him and hug him freely. Children responding and relating to an adult is just plain wrong, and potentially dangerous. A “mature” person should just not be spontaneous and youthfully playful. WATCH YOUR KIDS.

No. Despite his being extremely well-groomed, clean and stunning, with the physique of an Adonis, handsomely braided hair and deep-set eyes that reflect universal truth, what will people from out of town visiting this area think about a man wearing a dashiki, necklaces and other accessories?

No. He may have a full-time job and spend only gaps of time at Weaver Street Market throughout the day, always making a purchase, but he sticks out and is simply not the “face” of our community. And, it has nothing to do with the fact that he is a black man.

No. Bruce may speak kindly about all, but what does he expect from a Weaver Street security guard who makes furtive, snide remarks to Bruce in passing or provokes him at every opportunity? He is just doing his job. Or, should he anticipate that property management would be anything but absent of support of creating a free, open and creative space on the lawn? Impugning Bruce is simply good business, and as we know, business is what keeps the community vital.

Now, finally, we can have the world we want – homogenized, inoffensive, bland, predictable, secure and assuredly white. We can be mundane, tiresome, boring, incorrigible and intolerant without apology. We can attend our churches, temples (no Mosques, please!) and other religious institutions, say our prayers, interpret the Bible as we see fit and as fits us, and be done with it. Who needs to “walk the walk” when people like Christ (and Bruce) are willing to do it for us?

DAVID ROTH
Carrboro

Help end homelessness

“I don’t want to die outside,” my friend said as he lay on a gurney in the emergency room. I had grown accustomed to visiting him here. When I could not find him in his usual spots downtown, my first call was to the hospital. For nearly a year, we talked about him getting off the streets. We filled out applications for housing programs with waiting lists longer than his life expectancy. Everything was a long shot. I was not sure it was possible; he expected nothing.

My friend is a veteran who had been homeless and living outdoors for more than 10 years. At a quick glance, you can see the toll these years have taken: multiple chronic health problems and a demeanor as tough as his prized black leather jacket. But underneath all of that, he has a generous heart, a sharp, dry wit, and a fierce loyalty to those he cares about.

Several months ago, we stood a few steps back as he unlocked the door to his apartment for the first time. He was overwhelmed; we all were. A widespread collaboration brought together the housing, rental subsidy and supportive services that made this possible. His gratitude for even the most basic comforts puts things in perspective. To him, a pillow is an unnecessary luxury, and when it rains, he reminds me that just having a place to stay warm and dry is a blessing.

My friend’s story is a testament to what is possible as United Way of the Greater Triangle and Orange and Wake counties gear up to participate in the 100,000 Homes Campaign. This national movement aims to end homelessness for 100,000 long-term homeless and disabled individuals and families by July 2013. The 100,000 Homes Campaign focuses local community efforts and resources on identifying and housing our most vulnerable neighbors.

For more information on how to get involved, please visit United Way of the Greater Triangle’s website at unitedwaytriangle.org/100khomes

EMILY CLARK
Durham

Lack of funding limits hurts elections

Watching the TV these days gives one the feeling that something is falling apart via the tugs of an ignorant political war, with money floating about like popcorn, and darkened by the thought that maybe one of these non-entities could be president of our United States! All this was promoted by a majority of our blink-eyed U.S. Supreme Court black robes who, following the initial recommendation of an early Woody Allen movie, *Take the Money and Run*, decided that the sky’s the limit when it comes to money for elections!

And the Supreme Court money has been thrown around in great gobs to enhance videos where everyone is allowed to cheat and tell you to “vote for me,” but the response usually goes to the candidate that has been able to pull down the biggest bag of bucks – The Dollar Sign Democracy!

Some years ago a famous Spanish writer – Ortega y Gasset, discussing Cicero and the crumbling of Rome – seems also to have put his finger on what is happening in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina.

He wrote that “when all this has crumbled, when the State lies in ruins, when laws, norms, ideas have gone down with it, when parties find no common ground on which to meet – then we may feel that we are witnessing the decay and dissolution of our whole system.”

Although Ortega y Gasset was talking to the Spaniards against the intrusion of Franco, he seems as well to be asking us the same question: “Are we not staggering under the impact of this same experience?”

Yes we are! It is even worse! We have a great, black president, and when you hear his name bounced among the money holders in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, etc. – you will know the reason why!

BILL SOMMERS
Pittsboro

Zumba for the Y

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro YMCA will hold a Zumba Dance Benefit on Friday, Jan. 27, from 6-8 p.m. This is a fantastic opportunity for folks in the community to experience the Y, while supporting a grand cause with two hours of Zumba workout.

Not sure what it means to Zumba? Well, consider it an exhilarating, effective, easy-to-follow, Latin-inspired, calorie-burning dance fitness-party that’s moving millions of people toward health. Since its inception in 2001, Zumba fitness has grown to become the world’s largest – and most successful – dance-fitness program, with more than 12 million people of all shapes, sizes and ages taking weekly Zumba classes in more than 120,000 locations across more than 125 countries.

At the Y’s Zumba party, we’ll have a DJ and dance instructors on hand, as well as free refreshments and give-away prizes. For a \$10 donation, you’ll be supporting your neighbors, as all dance proceeds benefit the Y’s “We Build People” campaign. The campaign awards scholarships for membership and programs available to families in Orange and Chatham counties.

Clearly we live in a community that cares, and despite the level of affluence many people enjoy, others are still in need. In 2011, local individuals, businesses and foundations contributed more than \$190,000 to help people served by the Y through the “We Build People” initiative. At the Y, we trust lasting social change can only come about when we all work together. That’s why strengthening community is our cause. No child, family or adult is ever turned away from the Y based on inability to pay for services. So, come on by at 6 p.m. on the 27th to Zumba for an amazing cause. People of all ages are welcome so bring your neighbor, parent, teen, friend or foe. No advance registration required.

DALE PRATT-WILSON
Zumba Dance Benefit volunteer

A RESOLUTION

In opposition to
Amendment #1
that will appear
on the May 8, 2012
North Carolina state
primary ballot

WHEREAS, Amendment #1 will appear on the May 8, 2012 primary ballot asking voters to decide for or against a North Carolina constitutional amendment that provides that “marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State”; and

WHEREAS, Orange County adopted social justice goals of which one goal is to foster a community culture that rejects oppression and inequity, thus the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race or color, religion or philosophical beliefs; sex, gender or sexual orientation; national origin or ethnic background; age; military services; disability; and familial, residential, or economic status; and

WHEREAS, Orange County along with its local municipalities has adopted the Orange County Civil Rights Ordinance with the purpose and policy to promote the equal treatment of all individuals; prohibits discrimination in Orange County based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, familial status, and veteran status; to protect residents’ lawful interests and their personal dignity so as to make available to the County their full productive and creative capacities, and to prevent public and domestic strife, crime, and unrest within Orange County; and

WHEREAS, Amendment #1, if approved by the voters, would prohibit marriage between people of the same gender, and further prohibit the recognition of any other form of domestic legal union; and

WHEREAS, Amendment #1, if approved by the voters, would be inconsistent with Orange County’s commitment to equal rights and opportunities for its residents and employees and would impact the County’s and its local municipalities’ domestic partner registry and benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Orange County Board of County Commissioners re-affirms its commitment to social justice, equal rights and equal opportunity for all residents of Orange County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Orange County Board of County Commissioners opposes the proposed Amendment #1 that will appear on the May 8, 2012 North Carolina primary ballot.

This the 24th day of January, 2012

LETTERS POLICY

Letters should be no more than 425 words in length and must be accompanied by the author’s name, address and contact information. One letter per author per month. Lengthy letters written in longhand will mysteriously become lost. Emailed letters are preferred. That said, send your letters to:

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